



Mt. Zion Church, Aldie, Virginia

Chapter 7

Stewardship of County-Owned Heritage Resources

Stewardship means planning and taking the necessary actions over the long term to successfully preserve and protect the resources for which we have the privilege of caring. Good stewardship also requires managing resources to help educate and revitalize communities, while maintaining the character that makes Loudoun a desirable place to live.



E. E. Lake Store, Bluemont, Virginia

The County recognizes its responsibility for owning and managing heritage resources and is committed to being a better steward through implementation of the following policies. Because Loudoun County currently owns and operates several historic properties it is incumbent on the County to be a good steward (Refer to Appendix A). These properties fall broadly into two categories; those located within staffed county parks and those that are stand-alone sites. Sites within park settings are operated by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) and are managed by the respective park staff. Each stand-alone property has a citizen

advisory board that, in cooperation with the County, is generally responsible for stewardship of the property. Decisions about restoration objectives, how the property will be interpreted or used, modifications to buildings and landscape, are made in cooperation with the volunteer advisory groups through a written agreement with the County.

The County has several successful preservation projects. For example, the Carver School in Purcellville has been restored as a senior center, adult daycare and community center. The Carver School was opened in early 1948 as the area's first modern elementary school for African-American children. Following school integration, Carver School was closed in 1968 and served as a school storage facility for the next 31 years. In February 2000, the Older Americans Humanities Corp. (OAHC), a private non-profit group, proposed restoring the building to active use as a senior center. The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved \$5.3 million dollars in funding for Carver Center on a bond referendum in November 2001. The design retains the historic fabric of the building to the extent that much of the existing woodwork, hardware, doors and even blackboards have been preserved. The finished Senior Center has retained many of the elements of the original school while providing a modern facility for adult day care, activities for seniors and community programs.

Another example of stewardship is the restoration of the Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church located on Route 50 east of Gilberts Corner. The Mt. Zion Church Preservation Association Inc. manages this County-owned property. Working in partnership with the County, the Association has been able to secure federal transportation-related funding (ISTEA and TEA-21) to restore the church, purchase additional land, and design a visitor's center. (Refer to Appendix E: Stewardship of County owned properties) In spite of these successes, there are challenges facing the County's current stewardship program. The absence of a formal process for receiving threatened sites and the lack of reliable funding have resulted in the loss of resources to development pressures. The County should take a leading role in the protection and preservation of heritage resources through the acquisition and good stewardship of these properties and, when appropriate, the de-accessioning of properties back into private ownership under conditions that ensure the preservation of the resource. The County is committed to a continuing program of acquisition and management of heritage resources. The purpose of these stewardship policies is to set the framework for acquiring and managing these resources.



Slave Quarters, Arcola, Virginia

Stewardship Policies

1. The County will be a leader in the protection and preservation of heritage resources through exemplary stewardship of public properties.
2. The County recognizes that strategic acquisition and maintenance of heritage properties can be a key component to the preservation of significant heritage resources.
3. The County recognizes the link between stewardship and public education and will use county-owned sites to promote community involvement, stewardship and education in heritage preservation and development.
4. The County will develop and implement a Heritage Resources Stewardship Plan for county-owned properties. The plan will set the vision for resource management and establish a unified approach to management, funding, accessioning, de-accessioning, research and education and heritage tourism development. The components of this plan should include as follows:
 - a. The county's vision and over-arching preservation goals including the rationale for acquiring and managing additional resources
 - b. Specific criteria and process for acquisition or de-accessioning resources
 - c. Funding options and recommendations for annual funding levels to accomplish preservation program objectives
 - d. A framework for a county public education program
 - e. Heritage tourism opportunities
5. Each county-owned property will have a stewardship plan that addresses, on a site-specific level, resource management, funding, ongoing research and education and the heritage tourism development that is unique to each site. Where historic standing structures are present an HSR

(Historic Structure Report) shall be prepared. Site-specific stewardship plans should address, as a minimum, the following components:

- a. Survey of the heritage resource (documentation and physical survey)
 - b. Assessment of resource condition
 - c. Historical context
 - d. Evaluation of significance (Eligibility for national, state and local registers)
 - e. Plan for immediate stabilization and protection
 - f. Plan for restoration and/or adaptive reuse including funding
 - g. Programming plan (education, heritage tourism, and revenue generating events)
 - h. Maintenance plan
6. The County will develop and implement a Strategic Acquisition Plan that will define priorities for county ownership using data derived from county surveys and assessments. The strategic acquisition plan will include criteria to evaluate resources based on the standards of the National Register of Historic Places and criteria to ensure public acquisition is consistent with the vision of the Heritage Preservation Plan and the Stewardship Plan. The Strategic Acquisition Plan will:
- a. Assess whether the resource meets overarching County preservation or thematic goals
 - b. Assess the resource's historic significance and site integrity
 - c. Determine whether or not there is an opportunity to preserve the resource in context
 - d. Determine suitability for adaptive reuse, public education, recreation or heritage tourism uses
 - e. Offer a funding strategy and evaluation of the availability of continued funding to fully execute an appropriate stabilization, rehabilitation, or restoration plan
 - f. Assess Federal, State, or local eligibility
7. The County will explore establishing a revolving fund for acquisition and maintenance of publicly owned heritage resources.
8. For county-owned properties and resources that meet the appropriate criteria, the County will seek National Register, County Heritage Register, and Historic Site Designation (as defined in the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance).
9. The Heritage Commission will, in collaboration with the County shape the vision for the stewardship and strategic acquisition plans, and will advise the County on site-specific management issues.

Implementation

The Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services currently maintains and operates several heritage sites in Loudoun. However, the absence of a Strategic Plan that would address funding for acquisition of threatened resources and management of County owned sites is a growing concern. The development of a Strategic Acquisition Plan with identified sources of funding is a key implementation strategy to strengthen the County's role in the stewardship of heritage sites.

The establishment of a Revolving Fund with public and private monies should be explored as a priority tool for the acquisition of heritage sites. The Preservation Plan recommends that the Heritage Commission serve as an expert committee to facilitate the development of the stewardship and strategic acquisition plans.

